

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA**  
**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY**

**Subject**

Legislative Policy: Issues Affecting Older Persons

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**Purpose**

To establish the Board of Supervisors' legislative policy regarding issues affecting the well-being of older persons and to provide guidance to the County's legislative representatives when advocating the County's interests to legislators, other elected officials and policy makers.

**Background**

The Older Americans Act became law in 1965. It established a series of broad policy objectives designed to meet the needs of older people. In 1973, Congress expanded the scope of activities to include nutrition programs and area agencies on aging. The Act mandated the establishment of Advisory Councils to advise area agencies on aging regarding all matters relating to the development and administration of the area plan. To provide better support for consumers, a number of County services were added to Aging and Independence Services for an improved system of care. These services expanded the role of Aging and Independence Services beyond seniors to also include disabled adults.

Since 1973, the County of San Diego has responded to the concerns of older people by establishing programs for those county residents. Older persons, by means of the Advisory Council to Aging and Independence Services, have shared their wisdom and have provided guidance to the County on many issues affecting older people.

The primary responsibility of the Aging and Independence Services Advisory Council is to advise Aging and Independence Services on the development and implementation of the Area Plan on Aging. The Board of Supervisors adopted the Area Plan for 2001-2005, which identifies the priorities and direction for County activities on behalf of the elderly.

**Policy**

The legislative policy of the Board of Supervisors regarding issues affecting older persons is to:

1. Support legislation that would promote the mental well-being of older adults with the expansion of mental health services and outreach.
2. Support legislation that would provide health-related programs, including nutrition, physical fitness, prevention and rehabilitation, which is cost-effective and responsive to demonstrated needs.

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3. Support legislation that would help older and disabled persons maintain, strengthen, and safeguard their independence and enhance their involvement in the community through a range of life options and other appropriate services.
4. Support legislation that would ensure the rights of the elderly and disabled to obtain protective and legal services through information, advocacy and adult protective programs.
5. Support legislation that would enhance the quality of life for older and disabled persons, including those with special needs, through support, employment, and social interaction programs that are responsive to individual requirements.
6. Support legislation that fosters intergenerational collaboration on public policy and programs to improve the lives of children, youth and the elderly thus strengthening the community overall.
7. 7. Support legislation that would establish a comprehensive and coordinated system that will secure and maintain maximum independence and dignity in a home environment; and remove individual and social barriers to economic and personal independence; and provide a continuum of care for vulnerable older adults.
8. Support legislation that would provide maximum local control of programs that serve older persons.
9. Support legislation that would provide adequate funding for mandated programs.
10. 10. Support legislation that would transfer responsibility for abuse investigations in long-term care facilities for the developmentally disabled and mentally ill from Long Term Care Ombudsman (LTCO) to state licensing agencies.
11. Support legislation that would prevent individuals who have been convicted of elder/dependent abuse from being paid homecare providers in In-Home Supportive Services.
12. Support legislation that includes a return to full funding for Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) programs and increases the SSBG allocation to keep up with inflation and population growth.

**Responsible Departments**

1. Health and Human Services Agency
2. Office of Strategy and Intergovernmental Affairs

**Sunset Date**

This policy will be reviewed for continuance by 12/31/07.

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**References**

Board Action 4/23/85 (24)  
Board Action 5/5/87 (56)  
Board Action 1/29/91 (78)  
Board Action 4/13/99 (42A)  
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